

AMERICA DOES BEST WHEN WE STICK TO OUR BASIC VALUES OF PEACE AND JUSTICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, for many years I have been calling upon our Nation's leaders to reject war as an instrument of foreign policy and to emphasize diplomacy. Today I rise to praise the Obama administration for opening a new page in our relations with the world by showing that it is ready to talk with friends and foes alike.

In just a short time, the administration has taken a number of important steps. It has sent an envoy to Syria, a nation which must be part of a comprehensive solution to the conflicts in the Middle East. The administration has announced its willingness to work with China on such critical issues as the global economy, on energy, and the environment. President Obama is trying to get Russia's help in convincing the Iranians to give up their ambitions of nuclear weapons, and they are encouraging our NATO partners to resume high-level relations with Russia. These relations, as we remember, were suspended after Russia's military operation against Georgia 6 months ago.

In the State Department, Secretary of State Clinton said that the United States will hold a high-level conference in Afghanistan, a conference to bring together the nations of the region and members of the international community for serious talks. Most importantly, Secretary Clinton has said that Iran is likely to be invited to this conference because, Mr. Speaker, we must talk to Iran if we're going to reduce tensions between our two countries.

President Obama promised to reach out to Iran during the presidential campaign even though he took a lot of political heat during that time. Now the President is making good on his pledge, and I, for one, applaud him for that. Of course, there are some who oppose these diplomatic overtures.

America's 6-year occupation of Iraq, Mr. Speaker, has weakened the ability of our Armed Forces to respond to real threats elsewhere in the world, and our occupation of Afghanistan hasn't defeated the Taliban. So now we must protect against sinking even deeper into an endless conflict in that part of the world.

Those who think that diplomacy won't work should read the article in today's Washington Post by Fareed Zakaria. He says the following: "The Washington establishment treats compromise as treason and negotiations as appeasement. It believes that the only way to deal with other countries is by issuing a series of demands. This is not foreign policy," he says. "It's imperial policy. And it isn't likely to work in today's world."

Mr. Speaker, I agree with him on that because I think it's exactly right.

If we are going to achieve our foreign policy goals, we must use all the tools of soft power, which really should be called "smart power," because these tools include diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and conflict resolution.

Mr. Speaker, America does best when we stick to our basic values of peace and justice. These values are the real source of our strength, and they are the values that will help us build a world that's peaceful and safe.

HONORING DAVE LAWRENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to honor a great constituent of my congressional district, Mr. Dave Lawrence of South Florida, for his upcoming recognition as the American Red Cross 2009 Humanitarian of the Year.

In order to be named Humanitarian of the Year, Mr. Speaker, the International Red Cross requires that a person possess these qualities: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, and unity. Well, anyone who has spent even just a moment with Dave Lawrence can see that he embodies these very qualities. He brings them into every activity of his life and every endeavor that he pursues.

Mr. Lawrence is a graduate of the University of Florida, where his many distinguished academic accomplishments earned him the title of "Outstanding Journalism Graduate." Mr. Lawrence's subsequent career in journalism would take him across our country from a position as editor of the Charlotte Observer to Detroit, where he served as the publisher and executive editor of The Free Press.

In 1989, to our community's great fortune, he settled down in South Florida, where he was the publisher for the Miami Herald for 10 successful years. As a journalist, Dave Lawrence was honored with the First Amendment Award from the Scripps Howard Foundation and the IAPA Commentary Award for the elegance of his writing. Under his leadership the Miami Herald brought home five Pulitzer Prizes in a decade.

In 1999 Mr. Lawrence retired from journalism to pursue another passion. Leaving his distinguished career as a journalist behind him, Dave's altruism would rival even those individuals of the many philanthropic organizations that he has led, such as the United Way and the University of Florida Foundation. This calling was one for which he had already proven himself quite adept with his own five children.

South Florida's Father's Day Council recognized him as their Father of the Year, and the Family Counseling Services honored him; his wife, Roberta; his three daughters; and his two sons with the title "Family of the Year."

Dave's calling was to prepare as many children as possible for their education at the earliest possible opportunity. His crusade gathered steam when he led the voters of Miami-Dade County to authorize The Children's Trust, which provides an independent source of revenue devoted solely to the children of South Florida. His success in this campaign earned him two prestigious appointments by Governor Jeb Bush.

As the Chair of both the Florida Partnership for Childhood Readiness and the Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Protection, Dave Lawrence served as the steward of the early education program for Florida's children. From these positions he was able to play a crucial role in the fight to amend the constitution of our great State of Florida. Now, thanks in large part to his efforts, all of the children of our great State of Florida have access to quality pre-kindergarten education so that they may have a proper foundation for learning that will serve them for the rest of their lives.

Dave Lawrence, I hope that you know how great you have been to our children, to our South Florida community, and, indeed, to our Nation.

The global economy will continue to grow, and yet our world will become smaller, and the competition in it will be even more fierce. But thanks to the philanthropic efforts of Mr. David Lawrence, the children of Florida will have the head start that they need to stay competitive and ensure that America remains the greatest democratic country in the history of the world.

Dave, we owe you a debt of gratitude, and no one deserves to be honored by the American Red Cross 2009 Humanitarian of the Year award more than you.

Felicidades, mi amigo. Congratulations, my friend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CRIME BY FOREIGN NATIONALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the crime committed in the United States by foreign nationals is hard to determine. The statistics are all over the map. But let me give you some tonight.

The 9/11 Families For a Secure America say that 32 percent of all people incarcerated in the United States are in the United States illegally.

Recently, I had the opportunity to go to south Texas to visit some of our sheriffs on the Texas-Mexico border. There are 16 counties in Texas that

border Mexico. Two of those are Culberson County, where Sheriff Oscar Carrillo is the sheriff. The other one is Hudspeth County, where Arvin West is the sheriff. I was their guest over the weekend a couple of weeks ago.

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And I was asking them this very question, "How can we determine if the cross-border travelers are committing crime in the United States? Does it all stay in Mexico, where we know there is corruption and violent crime, or does it come over to the United States?"

Well, Sheriff Arvin West gave me this statistic. There are two jails in Hudspeth County, one has a little over 100, and the other one is a private jail of over 500. He said most of the people in both of those jails are foreign nationals.

And I asked him, "Are these people charged with immigration violations or are they charged with other crimes?" He said, "No, they are charged with committing crimes in my county." He said, in fact, the jail that has a little over 100, every person in the jail is illegally in the United States except for one person. He said, "If I didn't have cross-border travelers committing crime in my county, I wouldn't need a jail except for two people, one for a male and one for a female."

So we do understand that crime is coming into the United States from cross-border travelers because the United States does not enforce the rule of law on the Texas-Mexico border or the southern border of the United States.

The Justice Department has said that 80 percent of the crime in the United States now is drug related or gang related. Newsweek recently reported that Phoenix, Arizona, is the No. 1 kidnapping capital in the United States, and most of it's related to the drug cartels and human trafficking.

Recently Sheriff Arpaio from Maricopa County in Phoenix has been arresting folks that are illegally in the United States pursuant to a Federal program called the 287g Program. Federal funds go to local communities to train local peace officers to enforce immigration violations.

It's been so successful that he's now being investigated by the Federal authorities, not for seeing how successful it is, but to see if he is following the rule of law, because some people who want open borders are complaining about his work. Of course, he says, he welcomes the investigation because maybe the Federal Government could do their job better. But it's important that agencies all work together. We are all in this together.

Even my hometown in Houston is changing its attitude. For years the City of Houston has been accused by some of being a sanctuary city, like San Francisco. It claims it's not a sanctuary city, even though the Center For Immigration Studies says there are over 400,000 illegals in the City of Houston.

So at least 400,000 doesn't make you a sanctuary city, but be that as it may, violence has occurred against our peace officers, Officer James Harris, Officer Andrew Winzer, Officer Florentino Garcia, Officer Guy Gaddis, Officer Rodney Johnson and Officer Gary Gryder, a personal friend of mine. You may not know those names, Mr. Speaker, but those are all Houston police officers killed by foreign nationals, most of them illegally in the country.

As recently as March 5, Officer Richard Salter was trying to arrest an individual with an arrest warrant, and he was shot in the face by that individual. He was an individual from El Salvador who had been through the criminal justice system five times, ordered deported, and apparently he never went back to where he came from or he crossed the border again.

It's important that foreign nationals understand that we will not tolerate crime committed by them in the United States. And it makes no difference whether those people are legally in the United States or illegally in the United States.

You come to America, and you commit a crime, and you are a foreign national, those people need to be sent home first. We need to tell them to pack their toothbrush, you don't have a right to stay in this country. And our government, working with local authorities, ought to do everything it can to send those people back home.

You don't have a right to come here and commit crime and stay here. And we should enforce the rule of law first with those foreign nationals that commit crime in the United States. After all, it is the duty of our government.

The first duty of government is not building roads and bridges and naming a bunch of post offices. The first duty of government is to protect the country, protect the citizens that live here. And the government that we have, the United States of America, needs to enforce the rule of law in this country because that is the duty of government.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AIG BONUSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, to date, the Federal Government has given American International Group, AIG, \$173 billion in bailout funds.

AIG, which is now 80 percent owned by the American taxpayer, posted a record \$62 billion loss in the fourth quarter of 2008. And that's why this

week the American people were outraged to hear that AIG would be paying out \$165 million in bonuses, courtesy of the United States taxpayer.

To add insult to injury, the bulk of the payments are going to employees of AIG Financial Products, the unit of the company that sold the risky contracts that caused massive losses for AIG. The American people are angry and frustrated. They want to know why are we giving taxpayer money to failing companies so they can hand out bonuses?

Mr. Speaker, last fall I voted against this \$700 billion government bailout because I do not believe American taxpayers should pick up the tab for the poor business decisions and greed of high-flying Wall Street firms. Because the bailout was authorized, every American taxpayer has an interest in ensuring that the U.S. Treasury does not recklessly squander their hard-earned money.

And the Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Paulson, as former CEO of Goldman Sachs, allowed Lehman Brothers to fail, but AIG got a bailout. AIG went on to pay out \$13 billion of that Federal aid to trading partner Goldman Sachs.

And now, thanks to the American taxpayer, AIG is still doling out hundreds of millions of dollars in employee benefits and retention pay. To the taxpayers who are footing the bill, the Federal Government's selection of winners and losers just does not meet the smell test.

The lack of oversight in the process is outrageous. Employees in eastern North Carolina, which I have the privilege to represent, are not rewarded bonuses when their companies lose money.

Constituents in my district want to know why should the employees of Wall Street be any different? I join the American taxpayers in their frustration. I pay taxes, and I'm frustrated too.

Unfortunately, all we hear from AIG chairman Ed Liddy is that AIG's hands are tied because these bonuses are based on binding contracts that were made before the government bailout. Well, Mr. Speaker, this Congress and the current administration better make sure that no further corporate bonuses are paid for with taxpayers' money.

I thank President Obama for speaking out so clearly and plainly about these retention bonuses because, like those of us in Congress, he has been hearing from frustrated taxpayers. I call on the Federal Government to explore every legal option available to block these excessive and undeserved bonuses on behalf of the taxpayers of America.

And in closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform and their families, and may God continue to bless America.